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ABSTRACT

This information brief aims to describe common learning disabilities that can cause reading problems and to assist the reader in accessing organizations that can provide appropriate help. The paper begins with a note about the many reasons why a person might have difficulty in developing reading skills. It then presents an article by Larry B. Silver titled "A Look at Learning Disabilities in Children and Youth," which describes types of learning disabilities, how they are detected, and how they are treated. The next section of the paper offers suggestions for parents in how to help their school-age children learn. The paper also discusses adults with reading or learning problems, emphasizing diagnostic testing and the help that is available. The paper concludes with a list of 13 readings for families, 10 readings for adults, and 18 readings for educators, as well as descriptions of 19 government and volunteer organizations. (JDD)

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BRIEFING PAPER

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Reading and Learning Disabilities

The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (*NICHCY*) is pleased to respond to your request for information about the problems many children, youth, and adults experience with learning — in particular, with learning to read.

Having difficulty with reading is by no means unusual. Millions of people in the United States have trouble reading. Some may not be able to read at all, while others have basic reading skills but might be considered "slow readers." It is useful to know that problems with reading are often accompanied by problems with writing, listening, or speaking. Each person having trouble in any or all of these areas should know that *help is available*.

There are many reasons why a person might have difficulty in developing reading skills. One of the most common reasons is that the person has what is known as a *learning disability*. Dyslexia is one such learning disability. There are also many other types of learning disabilities that can cause problems with learning to read or learning in general. These are described later in this guide.

Not all troubles with reading are caused by learning disabilities. It is important to determine what is causing the problem. Some causes other than learning disabilities are poor vision or hearing, emotional disturbance, or mental retardation. A person having trouble with reading should talk with specialists in the reading field and receive a thorough assessment. Through assessment, the nature of the reading problem can be determined. Then action can be taken to help the person overcome his or her specific problem.

This information brief has been developed with two major purposes in mind. These are:

- to describe some of the most common learning disabilities that can cause reading problems; and
- to put you in touch with organizations that can provide you with help to fit your needs.

This paper is organized into sections, as follows:

- a look at learning disabilities in children and youth;
- suggestions for parents in how to help their school-age children learn;

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- considerations for adults with reading and learning problems, including a description of the diagnostic process for adults; and
- book and organizational resources for: parents of school-age children with learning disabilities; adults with learning disabilities; and educators or other service providers who work with individuals with reading problems and/or learning disabilities.

We hope that you will take advantage of the expertise and assistance offered by the many excellent organizations we have listed throughout this document. They can help you to work with and overcome your learning problems. If you find you have need of additional information or assistance, please feel free to contact ***NICHCY*** again.

A Look at Learning Disabilities in Children and Youth

by Larry B. Silver, M.D.

Reprinted with permission from the Learning Disability Association of Montgomery County, Inc., in Maryland

Children and adolescents perform poorly in school for various reasons. Some have emotional or family problems; for others, the source of trouble is the community, the school, or peers; and some are simply below average intellectually. But 10 to 20 percent have a neurologically-based disorder of the type called a *learning disability*. According to the definition used by the federal government, these children are of at least average intelligence (many are far above average), and their academic problems are not caused by an emotional disturbance, by social or cultural conditions, or by a primary visual, hearing, or motor disability. Instead, the reason for their learning problems seems to be that their brains are "wired" in a way slightly different from the average person's. About 20 percent of children with learning disabilities also have a related problem, attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Its symptoms include hyperactivity, distractibility, and impulsiveness. ADD or ADHD must be evaluated and treated separately from the learning disability.

Learning disabilities are lifelong conditions that may require special understanding and help throughout grade school, high school, and beyond. They are also life disabilities that have important effects outside of the classroom, interfering not only with academic work but also with children's games, daily activities, and even friendships. Therefore, help for these children means more than classroom special education.

Types of Learning Disabilities

By the late 1960s, the present model of learning disabilities was established. This model distinguishes four stages of information processing used in learning: input, integration, memory, and output. *Input* is the process of recording in the brain information that comes from the senses. *Integration* is the process of interpreting this information. *Memory* is its storage for later retrieval. *Output* of information is achieved through language or motor (muscular) activity. Learning disabilities can be classified by their effects at one or more of these stages. Each child has individual strengths and weaknesses at each stage.

Input

The first major type of problem at the input stage is a visual perception disability. Some students have difficulty in recognizing the position and shape of what they see. Letters may be reversed or rotated; for example, the letters d, b, p, q, and g might be confused. The child might also have difficulty distinguishing a significant form from its background. People with this disability often have reading problems. They may jump over words, read the same line twice, or skip lines. Other students have poor depth perception or poor distance judgement. They might bump into things, fall over chairs, or knock over drinks.

The other major input disability is in auditory perception. Students may have difficulty understanding because they do not distinguish subtle differences in sounds. They confuse words and phrases that sound alike — for example, "blue" with "blow" or "ball" with "bell." Some children find it hard to pick out an auditory figure from its background; they may not respond to the sound of a parent's or teacher's voice, and it may seem that they are not listening or paying attention. Others process sound slowly and therefore cannot keep up with the flow of conversation, inside or outside the classroom. Suppose a parent says, "It's getting late. Go upstairs, wash your face, and get into your pajamas. Then come back down for a snack." A child with this disability might hear only the first part and stay upstairs.

Integration

Integration disabilities take several forms, corresponding to the three stages of sequencing, abstraction, and organization.

A student with a sequencing disability might recount a story by starting in the middle, going to the beginning, and then proceeding to the end. The child might also reverse the order of letters in words, seeing "dog" and reading "god." Such children are often unable to use single units of a memorized sequence correctly. If asked what comes after Wednesday, they have to start counting from Sunday to get the answer. In using a dictionary, they must start with "A" each time.

The second type of integration disability involves abstraction. Students with this problem have difficulty in inferring meaning. They may read a story but not be able to generalize from it. They may confuse different meanings of the same word used in different ways. They find it difficult to understand jokes, puns, or idioms.

Once recorded, sequenced, and understood, information must be organized — integrated into a constant flow and related to what has previously been learned. Students with an organization disability find it difficult to make bits of information cohere into concepts. They may learn a series of facts without being able to answer general questions that require the use of these facts. Their lives in and outside of the classroom reflect this disorganization.

Memory

Disabilities also develop at the third stage of information processing, memory. Short-term memory retains information briefly while we attend to it or concentrate upon it. For example, most of us can retain the 10 digits of a long distance telephone number long enough to dial, but we forget it if we are interrupted. When information is repeated often enough, it enters long-term memory, where it is stored and can be retrieved later. Most memory disabilities affect short-term memory only; students with these disabilities need many more repetitions than usual to retain information.

Output

At the fourth stage, output, there are both language and motor disabilities. Language disabilities almost always involve what is called "demand language" rather than spontaneous language. Spontaneous language occurs when we initiate speaking — select the subject, organize our thoughts, and find the correct words before opening our mouths. Demand language occurs when someone else creates the circumstances in which communication is required. A question is asked, and we must simultaneously organize our thoughts, find the right words, and answer. A child with a language disability may speak normally when initiating conversation but respond hesitantly in demand situations — pause, ask for the question to be repeated, give a confused answer, or fail to find the right words.

Motor disabilities are of two types: poor coordination of large muscle groups, which is called gross motor disability; and poor coordination of small muscle groups, which is called fine motor disability. Gross motor disabilities make children clumsy. They stumble, fall, and bump into things; they may have difficulty in running, climbing, riding a bicycle, buttoning shirts, or tying shoelaces. The most common type of fine motor disability is difficulty in coordinating the muscles needed for writing. Children with this problem write slowly, and their handwriting is often unreadable. They may also make spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.

Detecting Learning Disabilities in Children

There are several early clues to the presence of a learning disability. In preschool children we look for failure to use language in communication by age three, or inadequate motor skills (buttoning, tying, climbing) by age five. In school-age children, we observe whether they are learning the skills appropriate to their grade. Schools and families should always consider the possibility of a learning disability before assuming that a child who has been doing poorly in school is lazy or emotionally disturbed. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Public Law (P.L.) 102-119 — formerly known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA), P.L. 94-142 — requires public school systems to evaluate children who are at risk for a learning disability. Evaluations can also be performed by profession-

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires that the school, in conjunction with the parents and relevant professionals, develop an individualized education program (IEP) for each student with learning disabilities.

als in private practice, beginning with family doctors. Attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and other problems should always be considered as well and evaluated by qualified professionals with expertise with these conditions. It is important to distinguish between emotional, social, and family problems that are causes and those that are consequences of academic difficulties, because they require different treatments.

The psychological assessment may include a neuropsychological or a clinical psychological evaluation. The intelligence of the child should be determined to learn whether the child is performing below potential. Discrepancies in performance between different sections of the IQ (intelligence quotient) test will help to clarify learning strengths and weaknesses. Other tests may be used to assess perception, cognition, memory, and language abilities. Current academic skills are judged by achievement tests. Both IQ and achievement tests help to clarify discrepancies between potential and actual ability. There are also specific tests that help to uncover learning disabilities. A speech pathologist, occupational therapist, or other professional may contribute further information, as can parents.

Treating Learning Disabilities in Children

Special education is the treatment of choice for learning disabilities in school. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires that the school, in conjunction with the parents and relevant professionals, develop an individualized education plan (IEP) for each student with learning disabilities. This plan is revised every year to take into account each eligible student's present skills and learning disabilities and abilities. The specific instruction students receive will vary depending upon their needs and capabilities. Some students attend special education classes full time. Others spend most of their time in a regular class and go to a resource room for part of each day, or spend most of the day in special education and the rest in a regular class. The regular classroom teacher must build upon the child's strengths while helping to compensate for weaknesses. The special education teacher consults with the classroom teacher and provides interventions, called academic therapy, to overcome or compensate for learning disabilities. Some children need remedial work to learn basic skills such as reading, writing, or arithmetic. Others also need special intervention to fill gaps; for example, students might have difficulty writing a composition in high school because they did not learn punctuation in an earlier grade. Strategies for learning appropriate to a given student's strengths and weaknesses can be taught. Some children need specific related services: a notetaker (for a student with a fine motor disability), word processors, laptop computers, books on tape, or extra time for tests. The IDEA requires schools to provide these special education and related services at no cost to families.

Parents must also try to understand the nature of their children's problems. Like classroom teachers, they must build on the child's strengths while compensating for or adjusting to the weaknesses without exposing them unnecessarily. A child with a visual motor disability, for example, might find it hard to load a dishwasher but could carry out the trash. The same child might have difficulty catching or throwing a ball, but no trouble swimming. Parents must think ahead about these matters to minimize their child's stress and to maximize his or her chance to experience success, make friends, and develop self-esteem. Treatment that affects only school work will not succeed, because learning disabilities are life disabilities.

It is essential to recognize learning disabilities and related problems as early as possible. Without recognition and help, children may become increasingly frustrated and distressed as they persistently fail. By the time they reach high school, they may give up. On the other hand, children whose problems are recognized early and treated appropriately can overcome or learn to compensate for their disabilities. . .

***NICHCY** thanks Dr. Larry Silver and the Learning Disability Association of Montgomery County, Inc., for permission to reprint Dr. Silver's article, which appeared in their November 1991 newsletter. The Learning Disability Association of Montgomery County, Inc., is a local chapter of the Learning Disabilities Association of America. You can contact L.D.A.M.C., Inc. by writing P.O. Box 623, Rockville, MD 20848-0623.*

Helping Your Child Learn: Some Suggestions for Parents

If you suspect that your child is having trouble learning to read, or trouble with learning in general, there is help available. *For parents of school-age children, the first source of help should be the public school serving your area.* Contact your child's school principal, express your concerns and ask to have your child evaluated. The school system is required by federal and state law to evaluate your child at no cost to you or your family.

The results of the evaluation will show whether or not your child has a problem with reading or learning and, if so, the nature of the problem. You may be told that your child has dyslexia or another type of learning disability. If the evaluation shows that your child *does* have a learning disability, the school is required by federal and state law to provide special education for your child — also at no cost to you or your family.

Suppose, however, that the results of the evaluation show that your child does *not* have a disability. In this case, there are a number of actions you can take. If you think that the school's evaluation of your child was not appropriate — for example, only one test was administered or the evaluation was based solely upon observation of your child — you can ask the school system to pay for what is known as an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE). There are usually strict guidelines for obtaining an IEE at the school's expense. Ask the school about its IEE policy. Of course, you can always have your child evaluated independently and pay for the evaluation yourself. Whether the school pays for the IEE or whether you do, the results of this second evaluation must be taken into account in determining whether or not your child has a disability and, thus, is eligible for special education services through the school.

If evaluation results still indicate that your child's problems in learning to read are not caused by a disability, your child will not be eligible for special education services through the public school. However, most schools have services available for students who are having trouble reading. Your child may be enrolled in a remedial reading program or work with a reading resource teacher to improve his or her skills. You may also wish to contact some of the organizations dealing with literacy (see Organizations, page 15).

Find out as much as you can about the problems your child has with learning, what types of learning tasks will be hard for your child, what sources of help are available, and what you can do to make life and learning easier for your child.

Suppose, however, that the results of testing show that your child *does* have a learning disability. In this case, your child will be eligible to receive special education services. Parents and school personnel then meet to discuss the results of the evaluation and to develop what is known as an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP will describe the level at which your child is currently performing, as well as identify the specific services or instruction your child will receive to address his or her specific needs. (More information about special education and the IEP process is available by contacting *NICHCY*.) Classroom accommodations are also possible and can help a student compensate for his or her learning disability. Accommodations can include:

- Taped textbooks available through Recording for the Blind (see the description on page 14);
- Extended time on tests;
- Tutoring;
- Use of a notetaker, for students who have trouble listening in class and taking notes;
- Use of a scribe during test taking, for students who have trouble writing but who can express their answers verbally to the scribe, who writes down the responses;
- Use of a reader during test taking, for students who have trouble reading test questions;
- Tape recording of class lectures; and
- Testing in a quiet place, for students who are easily distracted.

The suggestions presented in the remainder of this article focus upon what parents can do to help a child with a learning disability learn and function within the home.

Learn more about learning disabilities. This information can help you understand that your child does not learn in the same way as other people do. Find out as much as you can about the problems your child has with learning, what types of learning tasks will be hard for your child, what sources of help are

available, and what you can do to make life and learning easier for your child. You can find the information you need by reading many of the publications listed at the end of this document, or by contacting the national organizations that are listed.

Become an unobtrusive detective. Look for clues that can tell you how your child learns best. Does he or she learn best through looking, listening, or touching? What is your child's weakest approach to learning? Also pay attention to your child's interests, talents, and skills. All this information can be of great help in motivating and fostering your child's learning.

You can contribute positively to your child's schooling by participating actively in the development of your child's IEP and by sharing with the school the special insights about your child that only you as a parent have.

Teach through your child's areas of strength. For example, he or she may have great difficulty reading for information but readily understand when listening. Take advantage of that strength. Rather than force reading, which will present your child with a "failure" situation, let your child learn new information by listening to a book on tape or watching a videotape.

Respect and challenge your child's natural intelligence. He or she may have trouble reading or writing, but that doesn't mean learning can't take place in many other ways. Most children with learning disabilities have average or above average intelligence that can be engaged and challenged through using a multi-sensory approach. Taste, touch, seeing, hearing, and moving are valuable ways of gathering information.

Remember that mistakes don't equal failure. Your child may have the tendency to see his or her mistakes as huge failures. You can model, through good-humored acceptance of your own mistakes, that mistakes can be useful. They can lead to new solutions. They are not the end of the world. When your child sees you taking this approach to mistakes — your own and the mistakes of others — he or she can learn to view his or her mistakes in the same light.

Recognise that there may be some things your child won't be able to do or will have lifelong trouble doing. Help your child to understand that this doesn't mean he or she is a failure. After all, everyone has something they can't do. Capitalize on the things your child *can* do.

Be aware that struggling with your child over reading, writing, and homework can draw you into an adversarial position with your child. The two of you will end up angry and frustrated with each other, which sends the message to your child that, yet again, he or she has failed. You can contribute positively to your child's schooling by participating actively in the development of your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and by sharing with the school the special insights about your child that only you as a parent have.

Use television creatively. Television, or videos, can be a good medium for learning. If the child is helped to use it properly, it is not a waste of time. For example, your child can learn to focus, sustain attention, listen carefully, increase vocabulary, and see how the parts fit together to make a whole. You can augment learning by asking questions about what was seen. What happened first? Then what happened? How did the story end? Such questions encourage learning of sequence, an area that causes trouble for many LD children. Be patient, though. Because your child does not see or interpret the world in the same way you do, progress may be slow.

Make sure books are at your child's reading level. Most children with learning disabilities will be reading below grade level. To experience success at reading, then, it's important that they have books to read that are on their reading level (rather than their age level). Foster reading by finding books on topics of interest to your child or by reading to him. Also let your child choose his or her own books to read.

Encourage your child to develop his or her special talent. What is your child good at? What does he or she especially enjoy? Encouraging your child to pursue areas of talent lets him or her experience success and discover a place to shine.

Adults with Reading or Learning Problems

Adults who have trouble reading or learning usually have had these problems since they were children. Their problems may stem from having a learning disability that went undetected or untreated as a child. If an adult has a learning disability, he or she will experience many of the difficulties described in Dr. Larry Silver's article about learning disabilities in children (see page 2). The difference for adults who have learning problems is that they no longer spend their day in school and cannot turn to the public school system for evaluation and special instruction. They may not know why they have trouble learning, and don't know where to go to find out.

Help is available. It's important, however, to know what is causing the adult's problem with reading or learning. Knowing the reason makes it possible for the individual to get the kind of help he or she needs. The problem may arise because the person has a learning disability. If so, then the person needs to work with instructors who know about learning disabilities. He or she needs to receive instruction designed for individuals with learning disabilities. But not all reading or learning problems are caused by learning disabilities. Perhaps as a child the person did not get enough basic instruction to build the foundation that leads to skilled reading and learning. Becoming involved in a literacy program might meet this person's needs.

Adults who have learning problems...no longer spend their day in school and cannot turn to the public school system for evaluation and special instruction. They may not know why they have trouble learning and don't know where to go to find out.

The first step, then, is to find out if the learning problems are caused by the presence of a learning disability. A thorough assessment can give clues as to whether or not a learning disability exists and can pinpoint areas of strength and difficulty. An overview of the diagnostic process is given on the next page. This overview is adapted from the HEATH Resource Center's publication called *National Resources for Adults with Learning Disabilities.*

"The child with learning disabilities feels isolated from the parent's culture and learns to hide her "shameful secret." And, of course, as the child carries this secret into adulthood and begins to face adult responsibilities, the burden of it grows and grows. Surprisingly, when the secret is finally revealed, it turns out not to be shameful at all. Once a person openly acknowledges having a learning disability, she finds it possible to relax and request help and support. Only after openly acknowledging the learning disability is the person free to work on improving her ability to learn."

NICHCY thanks Sally L. Smith for her permission to reprint this quote from her (1991) book *Succeeding Against the Odds: Strategies and Insights from the Learning Disabled* (p.20). Information on how to obtain this excellent book can be found on page 9 in this guide.

Adults with Learning Disabilities: Assessing the Problem

Adapted with permission from the HEATH Resource Center

When adults suspect they may have a learning disability, they often begin a search for solutions. They may have difficulty in locating resources to diagnose the disability. For many individuals, obtaining a diagnosis can involve locating one or more professionals to select, perform, and interpret diagnostic tests.

Why is Diagnostic Testing Necessary?

These tests are needed because:

- Obtaining accurate diagnostics is the first step in overcoming the effects of a learning disability.
- Learning with a learning disability requires different learning strategies.

What is the Diagnostic Process for Adults?

The diagnostic process for adults with learning disabilities is different from diagnosis and testing for children. While diagnosis for children and youth is tied to the education process, diagnosis for adults is more directly related to problems in employment, life situations, and education. An adult will need to find a diagnostician experienced in working with adults and who is oriented to adult school- and work-related learning needs. The assessment process will include a diagnosis and an evaluation to decide on possible choices for treatment.

The **diagnosis** identifies the type of specific learning disability by showing strengths and weaknesses in the way an individual learns and uses information. Both informal and formal activities are used in this process. For example, information may be collected about the person's life and academic history and why there is a need for the testing. More formal activities would include measuring learning/work style, such as visual memory or memory for numbers.

An **evaluation** can then be offered, suggesting ways to overcome some of the effects of the disability. This may include strengthening skills by working with someone who takes into account the way the individual learns best.

Until recently, it was not widely recognized that learning disabilities have influenced the lives of adults, especially those whose conditions were not diagnosed during school years. It is now clear that adults should be evaluated in a manner related to their age, experience, and career objectives.

How Do You Find Someone to Perform the Testing?

You may be wondering how to find a professional qualified to conduct adult assessments. Several local agencies can either perform the tests or refer you to diagnosticians for adults within the community. Agencies to contact for information include:

- The public school system - Ask about Adult Education programs conducted through the school system and the availability of testing;
- Adult Literacy Programs or Literacy Councils - These may be listed in your local telephone book. If not, call the national literacy organizations listed under Organizations on page 15 and ask what programs are available in your community;
- Learning Disability Association in your area, often listed in the telephone book with the name of the city or county first;
- Counseling or Study Skills Centers at a local community college;
- Guidance Counselors in high school;
- Orton Dyslexia Society (see description on page 14);
- Special Education Programs at a local public school or university; and
- Vocational Rehabilitation Agency in your state or county.

These organizations or individuals may also be able to put you in touch with an educational therapist or learning specialist in private practice who can perform and interpret the tests you need.

Questions to Ask Evaluators

- Have you tested many adults with learning disabilities?
- What is the cost of the testing? What does this cost cover?
- Can insurance cover the costs? Are there other funding sources? Can a payment program be worked out?
- How long does the testing take?
- Will there be a written report of the assessment? Will I be able to meet with you to discuss the results?
- Will our discussion give me information regarding why I am

having trouble with my school, job, or life at home?

- Will you also give me ideas on how to improve (remediate) my areas of disability and how to get around (compensate for) my disabilities?
- Will the report make recommendations about where to go for immediate help?
- If there are additional questions, are you available for more consultation? If so, what are the charges?

This overview has been adapted from the HEATH Resource Center's *Resources for Adults with Learning Disabilities* (1994). For a free copy, contact the HEATH Resource Center, American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036-1192. ***NICHCY*** thanks Rhona Hartman, Director of HEATH, for her permission to adapt and reprint this material.

READINGS FOR FAMILIES

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Fisher, G., & Cummings, R. (1993). *The survival guide for teenagers with LD (learning differences).* Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit. (Available from Free Spirit Publishing, 400 First Avenue N., Suite 616, Minneapolis, MN 55401-1730. Telephone: 1-800-735-7323.)

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Smith, S.L. (1991). *Succeeding against the odds: Strategies and insights from the learning disabled.* Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc. (Available from Putnam Publishing, at address above. Also available on cassette through the loan program of Recording for the Blind (RFB) in Princeton, NJ. For information about how to borrow the book on tape, see "Recording for the Blind" under Organizations below.)

Wallbrown, F.H., & Wallbrown, J.D. (1990). *So your child has a learning problem: Now what?* (2nd ed.). Brandon, VT: CPPC. (Available from CPPC, 4 Conant Square, Brandon, VT 05733. Telephone: 1-800-433-8234.)

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ORGANIZATIONS

This section lists organizations that can be of help to **parents** who have a child with a reading problem or learning disability, to **adults** who would like to improve their reading or learning skills, and to **educators** and other professionals who work with students who are having difficulty learning. Under each name and address, you will see the line "Resource Useful To," followed by the groups (parents, adults, or educators) who will find this organization most helpful.

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSES AND GOVERNMENT AND STATE AGENCIES

Division of Adult Education and Literacy Clearinghouse
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-7240
Telephone: (202) 205-9996

Resource Useful To: Adults; Educators (working with adults)

This Clearinghouse can provide the adult education community with resources in adult education, including putting adults in contact with the Office of Adult Education within their state. Fact sheets, bibliographies, directories, and other publications are available for adults who have special learning needs.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education
Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589
Telephone: 1-800-328-0272

Resource Useful To: Parents; Educators (of school-age children)

This ERIC Clearinghouse makes available numerous publications on learning disabilities, including *Readings about Children and Youth with Learning Disabilities* (Digest Number E465R).

ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication (ERIC/REC)
Indiana University, Smith Research Center
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698
Telephone: 1-800-759-4723; (812) 855-5847

Resource Useful To: Parents; Adults; Educators

The Clearinghouse is concerned with the acquisition of functional competence in reading, writing, speaking, and listening at all educational levels and in all social contexts. The Clearinghouse makes available bibliographies on a variety of reading topics, including learning disabilities and reading.

An offshoot of the Clearinghouse is the Family Literacy Center, whose purpose is to encourage parents to participate in their children's academic development while simultaneously improving their own literacy. An audio-journal called *Parents and Children Together* is published periodically by the Family Literacy Center. Each issue is filled with suggestions for involving children in reading, practical reading activities that parents can do with their children, recommendations for books to read, and a read-along story accompanied by a story tape. A free sample of this material is available upon request.

HEATH Resource Center
One Dupont Circle, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036-1193
Telephone: 1-800-544-3284; (202) 939-9320

Resource Useful To: Parents (of young LD adults); Adults

HEATH is a national clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities. HEATH distributes a publication called *National Resources for Adults with Learning Disabilities* and has information on how and where adults with learning disabilities can get training after high school. This includes information about vocational preparation programs, adult education, and college.

National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center
Academy for Educational Development
1875 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Suite 800
Washington, DC 20009-1202
Telephone: (202) 884-8185

Resource Useful To: Educators, Literacy Providers

The Center is a national resource for information on learning disabilities and their impact on the provision of literacy services. A main function of the Center is to serve as a national exchange network for the sharing of information, research, and resources regarding the relationship between adult literacy and learning disabilities.

National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education (NCLE)
Center for Applied Linguistics
1118 22nd Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20037
Telephone: (202) 429-9292, extension 200

Resource Useful To: Educators (of adults with limited English proficiency)

NCLE is the only national clearinghouse for adult English as a second language (ESL) and literacy information. Educators can call to find out resources available for working with adults with limited English proficiency and out-of-school youth with literacy problems. NCLE maintains a resource center that includes a database of over 5,000 individuals and literacy programs working with LEP adults.

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)
P.O. Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013-1492
Telephone: 1-800-695-0285 (Voice/TT); (202) 884-8200

Resource Useful To: Parents; Educators

NICHCY can provide parents with information about special education and the rights children and youth with disabilities have under the law. NICHCY can also provide parents and others with a *State Resource Sheet*, useful for identifying resources within their state. This includes names, addresses, and telephone numbers of state agencies, disability organizations, and parent groups serving individuals with disabilities and their families. A variety of other publications on disability issues is available free of charge. A *Publications List* is available upon request.

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS)
Library of Congress
1291 Taylor Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20542
Telephone: (202) 707-5100

Resource Useful To: Parents; Adults

Many individuals with learning disabilities may be able to borrow "talking books" (books on tape) from NLS, but they must first establish their eligibility for the program. Call or write NLS and ask for an application form for reading disabilities and *Talking Books and Reading Disabilities*, a factsheet outlining the eligibility requirements for persons with learning disabilities. Once eligibility is established, the person can borrow, on tape, manyof the same books that public libraries make available in print.

State Department of Education
Consult your local telephone directory for the office in your state.

Resource Useful To: Adults; Educators

The State Department of Education in each state should have a department concerned with adult education or literacy. This office can usually refer callers to adult education or literacy programs within their community. Technical assistance, information, and referral may be available to educators working with school-age children with learning disabilities or with adults with literacy concerns.

Vocational Rehabilitation Office
Consult your local telephone directory for the office in your vicinity.

Resource Useful To: Adults

Through the Vocational Rehabilitation system, adults with learning disabilities may be able to get information and referral. Services may also be available, such as literacy and job training.

NATIONAL LEARNING DISABILITIES ORGANIZATIONS

Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD)
P.O. Box 40303
Overland Park, KS 66204
Telephone: (913) 492-8755

Resource Useful To: Educators

The Council for Learning Disabilities provides services to professionals who work with individuals with learning disabilities. Members include educators, diagnosticians, psychologists, physicians, optometrists, and speech, occupational, and physical therapists. All members receive the *Learning Disability Quarterly*, as well as the *LD Forum*, a teacher-oriented magazine.

Division for Learning Disabilities
Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091
Telephone: (703) 620-3660

Resource Useful To: Educators

The Division for Learning Disabilities is one of the many special organizations within the Council for Exceptional Children. DLD publishes its own journal (*Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*) and newsletter. Teachers and other service providers can contact DLD about learning disabilities, publications, and membership.

Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA)
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234
Telephone: (412) 341-1515

Useful Resource for: Parents; Adults; Educators

The Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA) has 50 state affiliates with more than 775 local chapters. The national office has a resource center of over 500 publications for sale. It also operates a film rental service. Call the national LDA office to receive a free information packet and referral to the nearest local chapter.

National Center for Learning Disabilities
381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1420
New York, NY 10016
Telephone: (212) 545-7510

Resource Useful To: Parents; Educators

The National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) is a national, not-for-profit organization committed to improving the lives of millions of Americans affected by learning disabilities. Services include: national information and referral; raising public awareness and understanding; educational programs; and legislative advocacy. NCLD provides educational tools to heighten understanding of learning disabilities, including: the annual publication called *THEIR WORLD* and the video kit "We Can Learn;" regular newsletters; informative articles; and specific state-by-state resource listings (e.g., schools and diagnostic clinics). Memberships are available to individuals and institutions.

Orton Dyslexia Society
8600 LaSalle Road
Chester Building, Suite 382
Baltimore, MD 21286-2044
Telephone: (800) 222-3123; (410) 296-0232

Resource Useful To: Parents; Adults (with dyslexia); Educators

The Orton Dyslexia Society is the only national nonprofit organization solely concerned with dyslexia. The Society provides a packet of basic information called *Basic Facts about Dyslexia: What Everyone Ought to Know*. Since it is a nonprofit organization, the Society must charge a $5.00 fee for producing, handling, and mailing this information. Two other booklets that are available in the Orton Emeritus Series are *Doctors Ask Questions about Dyslexia* and *The Other Sixteen Hours: Social and Emotional Problems of Dyslexia*.

(Description continues at top of next column.)

The Society has over 40 branches across the country and in Canada and Israel which offer programs in information and referral, government affairs, education, research, and publications. Persons seeking resources, such as diagnosticians, educational therapists, tutors, and teacher trainers may call the Society for the names of service providers in their zip-code area.

The Society publishes a scholarly journal, *Annals of Dyslexia*, and a quarterly newsletter, *Perspectives on Dyslexia*. Also available are two publications dealing with language and teacher education and several collections of papers by noted experts in the field of dyslexia.

Recording for the Blind (RFB)
The Anne T. Macdonald Center
20 Roszel Road
Princeton, NJ 08542
Telephone: (609) 452-0606

Resource Useful To: Individuals (beyond the fourth grade) with learning disabilities who cannot read standard print material

Recording for the Blind (RFB) is a nonprofit service organization that provides educational and professional books in accessible media to people with print disabilities. RFB has an extensive free library of books on audiocassette, covering all subjects and all academic levels from fourth grade through postgraduate studies. An additional service is E-text — books on computer disk, which are available for purchase. The E-text collection presently contains primarily computer titles.

RFB's services are available to persons with a verified visual, physical, or specific learning disability that substantially limits reading. To become a lifetime member of RFB, you must complete an application for service (which contains a "disability verification" and "certification") and include a one-time nominal registration fee. An application form is available from RFB's Customer Services Department (1-800-221-4792).

NATIONAL LITERACY ORGANIZATIONS

Laubach Literacy Action (LLA)
P.O. Box 131
Syracuse, NY 13210
Telephone: (315) 422-9121

Resource Useful To: Adults; Educators

LLA is the largest network of adult literacy programs in the United States. The programs provide literacy instruction through the use of trained volunteers. Adults interested in improving their reading can call to find out if an affiliate provides instruction in or near their community. Educators can contact the New Readers Press, a partner of LLA, for materials they can use in literacy, adult basic education, and work force literacy programs. New Readers Press's telephone number is: 1-800-448-8878.

National Contact Hotline
Contact Center, Inc.
P.O. Box 81826
Lincoln, NE 68501-1826
Telephone: (800) 228-8813; (800) 552-9097 for TT

Resource Useful to: Adults

Contact Center, Inc., a 25-year old information and referral agency, operates this national hotline to help individuals with literacy problems. This organization maintains a database of over 12,000 literacy programs across the country. The hotline operates 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, and is staffed with Spanish/English bilingual operators on each shift. Call the hotline to get information about literacy providers in your community. Additional, follow-up information will also be sent through the mail.

Literacy Volunteers of America
5795 Widewaters Parkway
Syracuse, NY 13214
Telephone: (315) 445-8000

Resource Useful To: Adults

This is a non-profit organization which combats illiteracy through a network of community volunteer literacy programs. These affiliates provide individualized student-centered instruction in both basic literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) for adults and teens. More than 1,000,000 tutors and students are involved in nearly 450 programs located in 40 states.

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Project Director ..... Suzanne Ripley
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NICHCY

AED

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